

STATE OF VERMONT
PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD

Docket No. 6860

Petitions of Vermont Electric Power Company, Inc.)
(VELCO) and Green Mountain Power Corporation)
(GMP) for a certificate of public good, pursuant to)
30 V.S.A. Section 248, authorizing VELCO to)
construct the so-called Northwest Vermont)
Reliability Project, said project to include: (1))
upgrades at 12 existing VELCO and GMP)
substations located in Charlotte, Essex, Hartford,)
New Haven, North Ferrisburgh, Poultney, Shelburne,)
South Burlington, Vergennes, West Rutland,)
Williamstown, and Williston, Vermont; (2) the)
construction of a new 345 kV transmission line from)
West Rutland to New Haven; (3) the reconstruction)
of a portion of a 34.5 kV and 46 kV transmission line)
from New Haven to South Burlington; and (4) the)
reconductoring of a 115 kV transmission line from)
Williamstown to Barre, Vermont –)

Order entered: 11/19/2010

ORDER RE POST-CONSTRUCTION REVIEW OF AESTHETIC MITIGATION

The Public Service Board ("Board") conducted post-construction site visits of the Northwest Vermont Reliability Project ("Project") on September 22, October 4, and October 19, 2010, for the purpose of assessing the effectiveness of the aesthetic mitigation measures as installed, and to consider whether any additional measures should be required.

At the site visits, Vermont Electric Power Company, Inc. ("VELCO") identified a number of locations at which it was unable to install its proposed mitigation plantings due to lack of agreement with (i) the landowner, or (ii) the municipality or the Agency of Transportation for some plantings within highway rights-of-way. Nonetheless, at the site visits no party or other

participant contended that at any of these locations the omission of proposed plantings resulted in an undue adverse aesthetic impact.

Based on its observations at the site visits and the comments from the parties and other participants, and notwithstanding VELCO's inability to implement some of the proposed plantings due to lack of permissions, the Board concludes that VELCO has implemented the aesthetic mitigation measures in substantial conformance with the approved plans and in a manner consistent with the intent of those plans. The Board further concludes that no additional aesthetic mitigation is required, except to address two issues related to transformer noise.

The first transformer-noise issue relates to the Granite Substation, where the phase-shifting transformer is unexpectedly and quite noticeably loud. At the site visit VELCO explained that the transformer vendor was unable to obtain the desired type of steel for the transformer, and the use of a substituted material has resulted in a noisier transformer. Given the proximity of the substation to neighboring homes, the Board requires VELCO to develop a plan to mitigate the noise of the phase-shifting transformer and submit the plan to the Board for review and approval. In developing the plan, VELCO should investigate all reasonably available measures to mitigate the transformer noise, such as the installation of baffles and other sound-reducing equipment. VELCO must file the plan no later than January 31, 2011. The Board reserves the authority to require additional mitigation measures to address the transformer-noise issue at the Granite Substation.

Second, during the site visit at the New Haven Substation, one of the nearby Forest Drive residents asserted that there is excessive transformer noise. VELCO explained that the transformer in question is one that Central Vermont Public Service Corporation ("CVPS") is scheduled to replace later this year. The Board requires VELCO to inform the Board, the parties, and the Forest Drive residents who are on this docket's service list once the transformer has been replaced. Any party or interested person, including the Forest Drive residents, who believes that the transformer replacement has not sufficiently resolved the noise issue may request that the Board take further appropriate action. Any such request must be filed by April 1, 2011. The Board reserves the authority to require additional mitigation measures to address the transformer-noise issue at the New Haven Substation.

Finally, the Board wishes to note its appreciation for VELCO's efforts to provide meaningful aesthetic mitigation for the Project. The Board also commends VELCO for productively applying in subsequent projects the lessons that it has learned here about working with landowners, neighbors and municipalities.

SO ORDERED.

Dated at Montpelier, Vermont, this 19th day of November, 2010.

_____)	
)	PUBLIC SERVICE
)	
<u>s/ David C. Coen</u>)	BOARD
)	
)	OF VERMONT
<u>s/ John D. Burke</u>)	

OFFICE OF THE CLERK

FILED: November 19, 2010

ATTEST: s/ Susan M. Hudson
Clerk of the Board

NOTICE TO READERS: This decision is subject to revision of technical errors. Readers are requested to notify the Clerk of the Board (by e-mail, telephone, or in writing) of any apparent errors, in order that any necessary corrections may be made. (E-mail address: psb.clerk@state.vt.us)